

ISWGNA and TT lead meeting

26 March 2021

Minutes

Participants:

Ivo Havinga (Chair), Herman Smith, Michael Stanger, Benson Sim, Jonathan Gessendorfer (UNSD), Jim Tebrake, Jennifer Ribarsky, Martins Margarida (IMF), Catherine van Rompaey, Eric Roland Metreau (World Bank), John Verrinder, Nicola Massarelli (Eurostat), Peter van de Ven, John Mitchell, Jorrit Zwijnenburg (OECD), Tihomira Dimova, Rami Peltola (UNECE); Michael Connolly (Ireland), Sanjiv Mahajan (UK), Erich Strassner (USA), Amina Khasib (State of Palestine), Celestino Giron (ECB).

1. Status of progress

a. Drafting of Guidance Notes – progress report by Secretariat and IMF

Participants welcomed the draft progress report and agreed with the assessment by the UNSD and IMF that additional guidance on how to use the tool is necessary to ensure consistency in its use across all Task Teams.

Participants agreed that the IMF and UNSD should review the tool to remove double counting of guidance notes, to produce additional graphs using the existent information, and, if necessary, make changes to the tool such as introducing a traffic light monitoring system to better serve its purpose of providing an overview over the update process of the SNA and BPM.

b. Consultations

Since the start of the SNA update progress, the number of AEG consultations has increased drastically. To avoid delays in the distribution of consultations, and to streamline the communication participants agreed the platform for consultations should be re-activated. The platform will facilitate the possibility for AEG members to react to each other's comments.

The UNSD will review how other organisations can facilitate the global consultations with their constituencies.

The UNSD will finalize the report of the AEG consultations on the guidance notes by the Task Team of the Wellbeing and Sustainability by early April 2021. This will conclude the January 2021 AEG written consultations.

c. Experimentation and testing in countries

Participants welcomed the note prepared by the UNSD on Assessment and Experimental Estimates. Members of the ISWGNA noted that the proposed experimentation and testing plan needs to be more practical, pragmatic, realistic, feasible and less complex.

It was agreed that the experimentation and testing phase of the guidance notes does not necessarily need to be completed before a decision on whether the respective recommendation should be included in the updated SNA can be made.

Participants noted the importance of having a clearer picture of which guidance note will need to be tested, noting that work on many of the issues is already ongoing.

The UNSD will clarify the following aspects of the note:

- Selection criteria for countries to participate
- The relevance of a review of ongoing work before planning experimentation and testing of each guidance note
- Criteria to make a preliminary selection of guidance notes that will go for experimentation and testing. These criteria may include whether the conceptual guidance affects the core accounts, supplementary tables or satellite accounts.

2. Coordination with other Committees

Participants noted that the prerequisites for global consultation are different for the SNA and the BPM update. Specifically, the need for consultations differs, which can lead to many consultations on the same guidance note.

It was agreed that a set of questions for the Task Teams needs to be developed. The questions will include information on the nature of the necessary consultations as well as experimental estimates.

Participants also agreed that better coordination between the BPM and SNA secretariats is necessary to avoid an increased response burden due to a large number of consultations on the same topic.

The update of the SNA and BPM will also need to be coordinated with the work of the task teams on the revision of the ISIC Rev. 4, CPC 2.1 and trade statistics manuals and the SEEA community.

3. Meetings and other events (based on calendar events):

Participants welcomed UNSD's the economic statistics calendar of events.

The calendar is based on a beta version of UNSD's open Global Calendar of Statistical Events presenting at <https://unstats.un.org/capacity-development/calendar/> the events of the current month and at <https://unstats.un.org/capacity-development/calendar/all-events/> all events.

The UNSD will share the economic statistics calendar of events and provide a list of websites the web scraper and crawler are accessing. Members of the ISWGNA can contact the UNSD if they recognize any missing events or incorrect events in the calendar.

4. Consistency issues for the SNA update

Participants welcomed the note on incorporating corrected inconsistencies in the 2008 SNA, clarifications and interpretations, and other global initiatives into the updated 2008 SNA.

It was agreed that in addition to the proposal by UNSD, a list of consistency issues between the SNA and the BPM should be collected.

Participants also agreed on the need to be selective in deciding which consistency issues to include in the updated SNA and suggested that only those structural elements of the issues should be included.

5. Other matters

The ISWGNA congratulated Mr. Peter van de Ven on his retirement from the OECD and the ISWGNA and his career and thanked him for his crucial role in the international economic statistics community.